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# LECTURES AND SERMONS

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TUESDAY EVENING, JANUARY 28, 1913—RUDOLPH EUCKEN, THE GOSPEL OF ACTIVISM

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If the number of books written about a man be any token of his influence and appeal, then Rudolph Eucken is one of the great figures of our age. Apart from his own writings, not less than half a dozen volumes have been written in exposition of his teaching within the last two years. His own books run through many editions. Just now he himself is guest among us, lecturing at Harvard, where large audiences assemble to listen to his deep and fervid eloquence. Who can doubt that we are on the eve of a new era when such a man, whose chief charm is that he is a teacher of faith, has so eager a hearing.

Something in our time must explain such men, as well as call them forth. Eucken is a philosopher of the life of the spirit, calling men away from the surface shams and shows of our day to the deep things of faith. His philosophy is, in fact, a gospel. It is a crusade against every form of spiritual lethargy and indifference, in behalf of heroic moral endeavor. What he tells us is not new, save in its depth, comprehensiveness and vividness. It is the high and noble message, taught by many before him, that truth, to be really true, must be translated into being. Wherefore his vogue, if it be not that men today are aware that they need a deeper life of the soul? Since this is also our need, we must know this man and what he has to tell us.

## I.

Rudolph Eucken was born at Aurich, in East Frisia, on January 5, 1846. From a child he knew the life of faith, and the unfeigned assurance which dwells in him today dwelt first in the heart of his mother. His youth was one of some hardship, as his father and his only brother died when he was a little boy. Happily, his mother, the daughter of a devout and liberal-minded minister, and a woman of warm sympathies and marked intellectual power, was able to give herself up to his education. Much, indeed, that was talent in the

mother, appeared as genius in the son. Eucken, a tiny, ruddy-faced, blue-eyed lad, attended the school in his native town, and was greatly influenced by one of his teachers. Next to his mother, Wilhelm Reuter was his guiding star. Deeply religious, this humble teacher awakened in his pupil a love of philosophy, especially on its religious side.

Reuter was a disciple of Karl Krause, an ill-starred, but potent genius, and one can hardly go far astray in seeing the indirect influence of Krause upon both Reuter and his pupil. No doubt, as the latter said the other day, it was the personality of his teacher, less than his ideas, that influenced him; but ideas are very subtle in their power. Take these three sentences from Krause, and substitute the word Spirit for the word history, and you will find the root-idea of the teaching of Eucken today. Incidentally, these words put a river-bed below and a sky above the eternal flux of life, as Bergson sees it:

"Against the hurry and loud show of the daily round a philosophy of history should uphold the calm strength of the eternal. A spirit of rest would then settle upon the life of humanity and inwardly pervade it. Yet every moment there is fresh birth and renewal of all things under the sun."

Eucken studied at Gottingen in the days of Lotze, but he found the great thinker too subtle and too frigid. Not Lotze, but Teichmüller was his real guide in those years, and he it was who introduced Eucken to the study of Aristotle. Oddly enough, the young man took his degree, not in philosophy, but in classical philology. Leaving Gottingen, he studied in Berlin, where he became, like James Martineau before him, an ardent admirer of Trendelenburg, who kindled in him a deeper love for Greek philosophy and history. Also, he learned from this great teacher a certain thoroughness and finish of scholarship which marks his work today.

Eucken is now perhaps the greatest living authority on Aristotle. After several years as a college teacher, in 1871 he accepted a call to the University of Bale as professor of philosophy. There he met Nietzsche, who held the chair in philology. Three years later Eucken succeeded Kuno Fischer as professor of philosophy at Jena, where he still lives and works.

Jena is a little old-world university town, with narrow streets and a great history. The university buildings are of Spartan-like plainness, but on every hand one comes upon tablets bearing world-famous names—among them Hegel, Schelling, Schlegel, Fichte. Nearby is Weimar, with its far-shining memories of Goethe and Schiller. One of the great living teachers of Jena is Ernst Haeckel, the biologist and monist, whose "Riddle of the Universe" is known and read afar. There, in a room austere in its simplicity, Eucken holds his high intellectual court, and students come from far and near to sit at his feet. Many young men from Japan are among these seekers after truth, and the Mikado is known to be one of his readers. His influence is world-wide, which is the more remarkable when we remember that he is frankly a religious thinker.

Short of stature, slight of build, with the white hair and beard of a man of sixty-six, Eucken yet impresses one as an intellectual athlete. His face is ruddy, his eyes blue, and when he speaks his whole being seems to light up with the glow of his thought. He is all animation, gesturing constantly, most of the time with both hands. Asked the other day if he had ever known a time of intellectual doubt and unbelief, he said he had not. The unfolding of his life or thought has been normal, wholesome, and without tragic break. Evidently the faith of his mother still glows and grows in his heart. It is the warm center of his thinking, whence he appeals to the intellect of the world with the fervor of an evangelist. He has not the literary magic of Bergson. Always forthright, often involved, his style is almost stern, though there are threads of beauty woven into the web of it.

## II.

The work of Eucken falls into two periods, with a brief time of transition between—the historical and critical; and the creative and constructive. So rich is that first period that my temptation is to linger over it, despite my plan. Three aspects of it must at least be mentioned. First, his criticism, or rather his interpretation, of the great thinkers of the race. One of his most delightful

books is "The Problem of Life," as surveyed by the master minds from Plato to our own day. There you see the fine insight and intellectual hospitality of the man as he seizes upon what is most significant and unique in the vision of each great thinker. It is a history of philosophy unusual in many ways, most of all in the fact that quite one-third of it is devoted to the teachings of Jesus and the early fathers of the church. Not many have seen, as Eucken sees, that Christianity changed the center and basis of philosophy, as well as of life.

Not less fruitful is his estimate of the intellectual tendencies of our time, as we find it in "The Main Currents of Modern Thought." Short work he makes of the glib rationalism so much in vogue a few years ago. Equally keen is his critique of pragmatism, now the fashion of the hour, which brings truth, he tells us, down to the level of mere opinion. It tests truth by the way in which it works, its "cash value," as James would say. But that, when taken as in itself the final test, is futile and no test at all. For life can only be worth while if there is more in it than pragmatism can guarantee. An example of his felicity both of insight and phrase is his saying that idealism is made up, not of the facts of life, but of "a few choice moods and rare insights." How true that is. One feels the force of it, at times, in reading Emerson, who ignores so many ugly facts.

Of great value, too, is the work of Eucken as an austere, yet wise and kind, critic of modern life. Alert to every new movement of the intellect, alive to all the tendencies of industry, society, and the state, with many of the trends of our day he will make no compromise. He sees that our civilization, to be made secure and really noble, must have an infusion of spiritual vitality. It must come under the sway of religious reality or end in ruin. Our culture must be more deeply rooted to be really fruitful and satisfying. In his little essay, "Can We Still be Christians," he insists that we not only can, but that we must. At the same time, Christianity must be shaken out of its "old vitrification and placed upon a broader basis. In this lies the task of our time and the hope of the future." That is, its forms must be revised if its essence is to be preserved.

No one could be more sympathetic with the church as a rallying point of faith, and with its work in deepening and enriching human life. Yet he protests, in his "Christianity and the New Idealism," and often elsewhere, against the externalizing of faith, and its mechanical routine. His



recent address on "The New Task of Protestantism" was memorable in its emphasis of the need of a deeper religious life. He sees that, despite appearances to the contrary, modern life is driving men back to religion, and that the church is not giving them the religion they need. Thus there are many whose craving for religion is checked by a deep aversion, or a wearied indifference, to the old forms of faith.

### III

Our chief interest in Eucken, however, as in every great thinker, lies in his constructive thinking. Here the titles of his three greatest volumes may serve as guide-posts both as to the advance of his thought and as dates in time. "The Unity of the Spiritual Life" appeared in 1888, setting forth in a stately manner his basic thesis. Eight years later, in 1896, came "The Struggle for Spiritual Existence," a noble work portraying the oppositions to the life of the spirit. Finally, in 1901, he wrote "The Truth of Religion," one of the most thorough-going defences of faith ever written. It took several years for the world to discover this book, but in its new and enlarged form it won the Nobel Prize in 1908. Add to these "Life's Basis and Life's Ideal," and you have a body of writing unusual in any age, and most of all in ours.

Take his fundamental insights in their order. By the unity of "the Spiritual life" he means, as he said the other day, what we mean by the word of God. If it seems vague it must remain so, because it is a reality so inclusive, so profound, that it can become clear to thought only in part. So that if Eucken is obscure, it is for the same reason that St. Paul, Augustine and Pascal are obscure. Nor can this Eternal Spirit Life be proved absolutely by no reason, because it is the ground of reason itself—the reality without which we could not reason at all. It cannot be put into a book to satisfy an intellectual curiosity, but is known, in the last analysis, by experience. Logic alone does not disclose it, but the facts of our life and history bear witness to it.

First, the very fact that we have a community of thought gives hint of an eternal order of reality which makes our thinking real and valid. Second, it shows itself in the emergence of the moral law, with its imperatives, its sanctions, its inner rewards, implying a moral order. Third, it expresses itself in the failure of external activities and sensuous enjoyments to produce satisfaction of soul. Fourth, still more impressively

does this Reality of the Spiritual Life reveal itself in the religious history of our race, chiefly in the "characteristic" or historical religions. All the great religions have their root in this Reality, and bear witness to it. They are not opponents, but co-workers in the enterprise of spiritual redemption. Highest among them is Christianity, the absolute religion, since its gospel of love and forgiveness could not "have originated out of the selfishness and impure impulses of man."

And yet, weighty as these evidences are, they do not produce absolute proof of the Spiritual life. How, then, can we know it and prove it? Doubt of any kind, as Carlyle said, is cured only by action—hence the Activism which Eucken urges with so much earnestness and insight. No truth becomes my truth till I act upon it, and thereby not only test it but make it a part of my very being. What I do builds itself into my nature and attests itself as real. Not by thinking about it, but by living it, does religious truth become true to me. What kind of action verifies faith? Any endeavor in the name of an ideal of truth, right, and beauty, is the answer of Eucken. So far forth this is true, but he seems to me to forget that at times we must cease to act in order to know—must "be still and know that God is God." He so fears quietism that he misses the light on the life of prayer, and that "wise passiveness," of which Wordsworth tells us. So it is that, though at bottom a mystic, he fails to discern the secret of that "intense stillness" which is none the less active, though it seems to be quiet. To me this is a grave defect in his teaching, a sad limitation.

No sooner, however, do we begin to act than we meet rebuff, and Eucken reviews the vast oppositions to the life of the spirit in a way to show us that he sees all that the pessimist sees. Nature rides over us ruthlessly at times, caring not for our souls. In our human world great wrongs run rife and seem to defy, if not belie, our faith. Within our hearts, as we need not be told, there is the struggle of soul against sense, so vividly described by St. Paul. Often the whole set of the current of the world seems to be against the spiritual life. Not Voltaire, nor Schopenhauer, nor Nietzsche could exhibit this side of life with more terrible force than Eucken does. It is the very force of his Nay that makes his Yea, when it comes, the more striking. For the very resistance of these oppositions reveals the fact "that there is something to be opposed." That something is in itself a reality in the human soul, and

points to an answering reality in the nature of things. At the bottom of the abyss of pessimism there is a light to follow which is our hope.

Life is a holy war, a perpetual "Either-Or," as Eucken puts it—that is, every man must either live the life of the senses or fight and win for himself a faith and freedom of the spirit. We win in this fight by making truth our own, by building up within us a spiritual life and character strong enough to overcome all oppositions. Nor do we fight alone. We have the fellowship and help of the Eternal, who works in us while we work out our victory. It is all summed up in the great phrase, "the redemptive making of personality," in which the teaching of Eucken is shown us in epitome. This triumph of soul over sense, he tells us, is not an evolution, but a new creation. Once we have won the victory, we must go back and reclaim and transmute the very elements of opposition to our service.

There are three stages in the making of personality. First, there is the stage of nature, in which we live under the authority of the senses, the dominion of expediency, and the tyranny of custom and public opinion. Many never get beyond this initial stage. The mountain is there, but they do not climb; the victory, but they do not win it. They know not such a moment as that in which Tennyson wrote his lines to "A Flower in the Crannied Wall," with its all transfiguring vision. They are individuals, but no personalities. Second, there is the stage of revolt against the despotism of the senses, against custom in behalf of reason—a break with the life of nature which brings the soul in touch with the eternal spirit. Most of us are in this stage. We are fighting for liberty of soul,

and the vague outlines of spiritual personality are beginning to appear. We are beginning to be citizens of the kingdom of light and truth, struggling up "out of the night that covers us."

Finally, if we fight a good fight, keep the faith, and never give up despite our defeats, we win our liberty. Then, returning to the old life, we discover that there was no real dualism, but only a challenge to call forth strength of soul. Then we can be of real service to our fellows—then we are not simply individuals, but persons. We can give because we have; we can do something because we are something. The contradictions and confusions of life yield a clue. We have no fear of death, since we are living the eternal life in the midst of time. Some there are who attain this victory while walking on this bank and shoal of time, while wearing our mortal flesh. This life is for each of us, and should be the passionate quest of all who wish to know the truth and by it be made free indeed.

So poor a sketch of a great thinker gives no inkling of the richness, vividness and amazing variety of his virile and quickening message. After all, the greatest thing in Eucken is the depth and fervor of his spiritual passion, his apostolic earnestness, his enthusiasm for the highest life. He puts to shame the easy-going devices of modern thought by calling us to rise above ourselves to a new creation and a new world. Not suffering, not difficulty, but spiritual destitution is for him the ultimate calamity. He invites us to a high, heroic, achieving life of the spirit by the grace and in the light of the eternal. Happy the age whose philosophers turn prophets and whose thinkers are men of lucid and revealing vision.

## Prayer.

Infinite Father, how vast are Thy skies, how far off Thy stars, yet art Thou here within us, too near for eye to see, moving us to offer our humble prayer. Thy majesty fills us with awe, and we veil our faces and bow down; but when Thou speakest in our hearts our fears flee away, and our awe is turned to joy. Under the wings of Thy invisible care each of us takes his hidden way, standing or stumbling, joyfully or with tears. May each day make us more aware that we are not alone, that One wiser than we shapes our ends, orders our lot, and leads us in the way we know not.

How often, when the wings of aspiration droop, dost Thou visit us without our inviting, with beautiful thoughts by which we are divinely surprised. Blessed it is, when we think we are alone, to feel the sense of Thy near presence steal over us with its holy calm, its subduing and exalting joy, and our hearts burn within us along the way. Then our tangled lives glow with unguessed beauty, and a unity of worth and meaning shines through them as we walk in Thy light. Visit us this day, we beseech Thee, with the quickening and revealing assurance of Thy presence, that we may know that our little lives have worth to Thee, and thus a meaning to us.

There is in us, as we know, a diviner life than we ever yet have lived; help us to live it ere we go hence. May each day find us attaining toward it, carrying thoughts of Thy holy will into all our strivings, and bringing our aims and acts under the sway of Thy truth. God of our lives, we would live to praise Thee, and make our years a fulfillment of Thy purpose, as the seed is fulfilled in its fruit. Wherefore do we live, if it be not to grow into the likeness of Him in whom Thou hast shown us the Way, the Truth and the Life everlasting!

We commend one another to Thee, who alone knowest our inner conflicts, our secret longings, our hidden failures, and our bitter regrets. O live in us more vividly, we pray, that we may live in Thee more victoriously, that so we may escape the evil that else may enter to becloud and defile. May we live only to work out with joy Thy hidden inworking, for it is Thou who givest what power and peace we know in these fleeting years. If evil has entered into our hearts, forgive, and cleanse, and heal us, in the name of Him who gave Himself for us. Amen.

## Sermon.

"He that believeth on the Son hath the witness in himself."  
I. John 5:10.

As you probably know, St. John was the only one of the Apostles who died a natural death. All the others suffered martyrdom for their faith. It was given to the beloved disciple to live to great age, and when he was too old to walk his followers carried him about on a cot. His gospel, in those sunset years, was said to be very simple: "Little children, love one another." Into the word Love he poured all the riches of his faith and piety, his hope for the church and for the world.

With what profound insight Browning has interpreted the closing hours of St. John in "A Death in the Desert," as though he had been one who stood beside his couch. Pursued by the foes of his faith, St. John takes refuge in a cave in the desert, where his mortal hour comes upon him. As the end approaches, in rapt prophetic vision he foresees, with his bright dying eyes, all the subtle attacks on the faith of Jesus, and disarms them. The teaching of David Strauss, at whose touch all things turned to allegory; the unctuous and persuasive doubt of Renan, in which one hears always an echo of irony; these, and the ruder forms of denial, are all predicted. Let men deny what dogma they will, let them tear the gospel record into tatters, they do not so much as touch the basis of faith as Browning states it in that poem.

## I.

Four voices make up the music of faith—the quest for personal worth, the concern for social righteousness, the conquest of death, and the beatitude of union with God. These voices have sung, now one leading and now another, and with varying degrees of purity and depth, in the religious soul of the race in all past time. There is not in history a religion worthy of the name in which one does not hear this high music in its uprising passion and desire. Those voices are singing today, despite all seeming discord, and they will go on singing when we have fallen asleep—aye, until whatsoever is to be the end of mortal things.

Religions are many, but religion is one—to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God. Here all the ages reveal their inmost heart of noble identity in one vast harmony of human aspiration and need. The disciples of Moses and the Prophets, the apostles of Christ, devout souls of the East and of the West, followers



of the wise Confucius and all-pitying Buddha, Hindu seers and mediaeval mystics, Catholics and Protestants, unite in a great fellowship here. So far as they are religiously alive, their quest is for nobility of soul, social purity, victory over the grave, and reconciliation with the will of the Master of the world. This is the mystic and unfathomable song of the ages of faith, and to it we must listen if we would know the dignity, pathos, and beauty of our human life in time.

Moral victory in the stress of actual life is the primal fact in all great and enduring religion. Now as of old, religion begins in an unveiling of the moral ideal, in the faith that God is somehow in our heavenly vision, in the daring attempt to begin, with the help of the Highest, to order our life of passion by the authority of that ideal. But man does not live to himself, and no sooner does he make this moral effort than he meets a new wonder. He finds that he cannot fulfill the moral ideal alone. There is the discovery that humanity rises and falls together, and he becomes, of necessity, a soldier of social righteousness. So long as his interest begins and ends with himself and his family, he is not really religious. There comes a time, however, when he sees that soundness in the faith does not atone for cruelty in life; that God requires purity and mercy of those who serve His name.

With this awakening our human life, both in the inner centre of the home and in the wider circle of friendship, becomes more precious. Unsuspected depths of meaning and beauty are disclosed in it. Therefore, death is clothed with new terror, and the idea that the grave is the end of all becomes intolerable. Then we behold the sovereign wonder of this mortal world. Holding to the enduring worth of the loves and ideals of life, the soul faces death, not with dismay, but with triumph, and changes what else would be a knell of final farewell into a song of hope. Life has come to have a worth which death cannot destroy. The idealist in time has become a servant of the Idealist in eternity, and he no longer fears for himself even in the valley of shadows. Hence the faith of Socrates that no evil can befall a good man, whether he be alive or dead.

## II.

Such is the faith of that eternal religion which clings everywhere to the soul of man. What does the religion of Christ add to it? That is, what is there unique, peculiar, and revealing in our Christian faith? Assuredly it does not seek to destroy, but, rather, to fulfill the universal re-

ligion of humanity. Surely the chief glory of Christianity is that it lifts the music of faith to its highest, and makes its melody authentic and satisfying by bringing the Reality nearer. In Christ the moral ideal took a form full of grace and truth, and walked among men, and the quest of personal worth became a personal fellowship. Here was the one incomparable soldier in behalf of social righteousness, seeking to establish the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth. He proclaimed the worth of the soul, the sanctity and sweetness of its fellowships, and the prophetic validity of its hopes and ideals. What man had dreamed was not only confirmed in His teaching, but fulfilled in His life.

Here, too, was One who faced death in its most terrible and baffling form—death in the morning of life, which raises so many bitter questions in the human heart. To the old death is natural; it means rest and reunion. It is the death of the young, to whom night comes before noon, that shakes the soul and stills it with tragic horror. With profound insight Thomas Aquinas lays emphasis upon the meaning involved in the fact that Jesus went to His death in the full tide of young manhood. This it was that made His triumph so complete that it has lifted the pall and set the world singing. When we read His closing words in the light of this fact they fill the earth and the sky, bringing life and immortality to light. Of a truth here is a peace born of union with the will of God which passeth all understanding, because it is the peace of God.

Let us note here two amazing facts about the life of Christ. First, it is not denied by any one that the advent of Jesus began not only a new date in time, but a new era in the history of the human soul. No one may ever hope to describe the refining and redeeming influences which entered our human world with His coming. Gibbon tried to account for the strange, new joy that swept through the hard old Roman world and failed, because he had no true estimate of Jesus. His famous thesis is like a study of Hamlet with the prince left out. What the influence of Jesus was may be seen in the lives of those who stood near Him in the days of His flesh. Rude fishermen became world-figures, mighty in word and deed, defying death with their heroic courage, and the records they left betray a literary art which is the despair of the greatest genius. As has been said, no one now denies the impulse given to the higher life of the race by Jesus of Nazareth.

What is still more amazing, and

none the less a fact, is that this wonder has repeated itself in innumerable lives in every age since His advent. In proof of this a cloud of witnesses rise up and testify to the presence with them of a living Christ hallowing their years. There have been dark days, even submerged centuries, since Jesus walked in Galilee; but in the darkest ages there were beautiful souls in whom the evangelic testimony shone like stars. Many times, as in the lives of Francis and Bernard, the eternal Christ seemed to take human shape again and live among men. This shining tradition of spiritual experience has never ceased, no matter how crude and wild the age. It has been a light always shining, a stream always flowing—not the fitful fancy of rapt and solitary enthusiasts, but the cumulative and authentic witness of ages of noble and devout living.

Against this witness of our faith the light arts of the sceptic are harmless and futile. As Wesley said in a letter: "If it were possible to shake the traditional evidence of Christianity; still he hath the eternal evidence—and every true believer has the witness in himself—which would stand firm and unshaken." In that sentence we have the key to the life of Wesley, and how he came to be so great a power in the world. Once hesitating, and morbidly afraid of death, there came a day when he attained to that sure knowledge of which his father spoke so frequently on his death-bed: "The inward witness, son, the inward witness, this is the strongest proof of Christianity." When he arrived at this assurance his fears fled, his whole life took on a new aspect, and he became a mighty soldier for social righteousness—one of that worshipping and toiling host whose music is the joy and the hope of our race.

### III.

This does not mean, however, that we are to throw our wits to the winds and give ourselves to fervors, which are often the most real of delusions. Nor does it imply that historical facts are to be proved, much less created, by the fruitful imaginings of ecstatic souls. By as much as our experience is vivid, by so much must we be on guard against the unreal and the erratic, lest we mistake feelings for realities. It must be tested, first, in the light of the consensus of the insight and experience of the loftiest souls. It must be tried, also, by the criticism of the intellect and its revelations set forth in an order of ideas. It must be put to work, finally, in the arena of actual life, and its validity made known by its fruits in moral achievement.

Every man must test his faith for

himself, honestly and relentlessly. If it be only a solitary vision it may fade and give way to doubt, but when it is seen to be in harmony with an apostolic tradition of spiritual experience, doubt grows dim. No system of ideas can adequately express the content of religious experience, but we must clarify that experience as far as we can and relate it to the facts of life. Thought is not a luxury, but a necessity in behalf of noble living. Many facts in life seem to confirm our faith, while other facts appear to belie it. Until our experience has shown itself to be valid amid the stress of moral conflict and contradiction, it is constantly exposed to peril. By the same token, when it proves itself authentic it becomes itself at once a testimony and a test. Said Thomas Erskine:

"I am not more sure of my own existence than I am of being under the eye and guidance of a Being who desires to train and educate me to be a good man. And yet I know that beyond the pale of the Bible's influence this conviction has rarely been fully felt, and I well believe that without that influence I should not have that conviction. But now that by the help of the Bible I have arrived at it, I feel that no demolition of outward authority, were such a demolition possible, could deprive me of it. Indeed, that agreement between the Bible and my spiritual organization strengthens my faith in the divine origin of the Bible more than any other argument could."

Here is the true Higher Criticism of the Bible, beside which what usually passes under that name is a minor detail. Once let the spirit and vision of that book sway a man, and it will do for him what it did for Erskine—make him aware that he is in the hands of one who is training him to be a good man. The Bible grew out of a profound religious experience, and when used aright it will produce in us, infallibly, the kind of life out of which it grew. That is the real test of its value; that is the infallibility most worth while; that is our great need—its God-consciousness to transfigure our fleeting years with enduring worth and beauty. When a man comes to the Bible in this direct and intimate manner he knows its real power, and no dogma is needed to prove that it is the great book of the soul.

Sit down quietly and let that wise old book tell its story to your heart. There is a strength in it, a tenderness, a veracity of vision, a power and a beauty that make men great of soul. Put theories aside and give yourself to its awful sense of the Unseen, its pas-

sion for purity, its vast pity, its sweet hope, and its melting pathos. Surely no man can read the story of Jacob and his ladder of dream and not feel the stir within him of wings seeking the sky. What man can repeat the fifty-first psalm on his bed in the stillness of the night and fall asleep without a prayer for a cleaner soul? Who can look upon the vision of Isaiah and not cry out, with the prophet: "Woe is me! I am a man of unclean lips!" Did ever any mortal follow the story of Jesus in the days of His pilgrimage and not find there the Man he ought to be, his dearest dream come true? While we are thus testing the Bible it is testing and transforming us, leading us into lengthening vistas and lifting skies.

One who knows the real authority and power of the Bible in his own heart will have no fear of any effort to make clear its history, but will welcome it. The intellect, working with the method of science, tolls over the records of faith; but the inner witness of the spirit is the final judge of the worth of ideas, dogmas, and rites. Wesley was right when he said that the man who has Christ formed

in him the hope of glory, has the eternal evidence of faith which neither fact nor fear can shake. From that living centre he can think as far and as fast as his intellect can journey, since he thinks from the inside and in the light of a reality deeper than logic. In the very nature of things, our thinking about religion must be shallow unless we have this deeper life of the spirit within.

Men today want no delusions and no pigmy faiths; they want a religion that fills life and the universe with light and music. Christ born within us, revealing the God of love in the universe, the Lord of love in time, and the life of love in personal and social service—that is the soul of Christianity. Here is the reality that gives to the moral ideal its final sovereignty, that guards the treasure of human love, and that opens to the soldier of justice a vista of endless hope. Not one of us but may have the witness of this faith and vision within his heart—a still centre of joy in the midst of mortal ills, a trysting place with the truth, a fortress of defence, a bugle call to do battle in a campaign that cannot fail.



## Prayer.

Eternal God, who art the fountain of the true and the good, the secret of human grace and strength, we worship Thee as the Father of all. Thy law is unveiled in the order of the world, in the life we enjoy and suffer, and in its solemn and subduing mystery which is Thy shadow. Thy spirit moves in our moral sense which troubles our ease, in the impulses of love that contend with our low desires, in that abiding faith which lies at the root of changing forms, in our dream of a state noble and benign, and in our hope of immortality.

Today may our thoughts be led forth beyond ourselves, beyond our kindred and neighbors, to the great nation of which we are members; to the land of our fathers and the hope of our race. We give Thee thanks for the years of growth through which we have come; for the discipline of dark times of trouble and adversity; for the men of light and power, who, sleeping now in the dust, yet live in the work they left behind; and for the living who, at ten thousand posts, are toiling for the common good. Through all the years Thou hast led us, often in strange ways, working out Thy will and purpose upon the earth.

Within this vast community of divers races and blended peoples, may peace reign, and right and justice more and more prevail. Make us in all places, high and low, a people of wise and understanding hearts. Purify our desires; exalt our ideals; wherein we err enlighten us; and so lift up within us a noble and aspiring mind that we may march onward in the light of Thy blessing. Forbid that we should shut our hearts against Thee, who art the real ruler of races and peoples, and by forgetting Thy awful law bring ruin upon a great nation.

Save us, we beseech Thee, from the seduction of ease, from the peril of vanity, from the folly of defying Thy mighty will. May we make no peace with wrong, no covenant with injustice; but, keeping alive in our hearts the spirit of the prophets and martyrs of our republic, fight for the right. Touch us with Thy gentleness; make us pure of heart that we may be free indeed; and keep us back from evil ways. Unto Thy loving kindness we make our entreaty; for Thou art the Father of all, and our refuge from one generation to another. Accept our prayer, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

## Sermon.

Every people, every human movement, has its salient man who embodies its genius and expresses its faith, its purpose, and its ideal. Such men, moved by the vague, aspiring spirit of their time, think thoughts deeper than they know, and follow dim paths. They march forward till they hear the people shout for joy, and, looking around them with wondering eyes, find that they have done great deeds. Carlyle held that the history of the world may best be told in the life-stories of its epoch-makers, who are at once actors and symbols.

Thus the grand moral idealism of the Hebrews took shape in Moses, who talked with God on the heights and "made great truths inhabit mortal souls." Julius Caesar was the Roman genius, clarified and kindled; and in Euripides we see the Greek mind as it really was, not as in Plato, but in the many who were not poets. If one would know what spirit dwells in the desert, what hot passions burn there, and what a fierce faith flashes in its silence, let him study the stern, daring, fiery figure of Mahomet, with a book in one hand and a sword in the other. It was not in Goethe, but in Luther, with his songs and stories, his rude vigor and his rich humanity, that the soul of Germany was revealed. In modern Italy it is Mazzini; in Russia, Tolstoi.

In America it is Lincoln, in whose rugged, homely, gracious figure the mighty and tender genius of this land, its faith and spirit and prophecy, found embodiment as in no one else. A child of the South and a leader of the North, he grew up in the valley of the Father of Waters, the son of a pioneer. The one master soul in our history, his life was the story of his country in a dark and desperate crisis in which it became, for the first time, a nation. Lowell, who was one of the few to grasp the greatness and meaning of Lincoln while he lived, called him "the first American." Emerson saw the same symbolic aspect of that great and simple life with its nobility and its pathos, its humility and its heroism:

"Lincoln was a plain man of the people. He had a face that disarmed suspicion, which inspired confidence, which confirmed good will. He had a strong sense of duty, which it was very easy for him to obey. He had a vast good nature which made him tolerant and accessible to all. This middle class country had got a middle class president at last, in manners and sympathies, but not in powers, for his powers were superior. This man grew according to the need;

he mastered the problem of the day. In four years—four years of battle days—his endurance, his fertility of resources, his magnanimity, were sorely tried and never found wanting. There by his courage, his humanity, his justice, his even temper, his fertile counsel, he stood, a heroic figure in the centre of a heroic epoch. He is the true representative of this continent."

No wonder something of mystery, a strange, pervasive appeal to the latent greatness in us, a sanctity, half tragic and half triumphant, lingers about the memory of this man. If you would know what America means, look into the face of Lincoln—that familiar face, so rugged, so homely, so human, so strong, written all over with the hieroglyphics of sorrow, yet with lines where smiles fell asleep when they were weary. There, in those deep eyes that never lie, in that suggestion of a smile that has tears in it, in those features marked with the seams of hard struggle, the light of high resolve, and the tenderness of pity, you will see what America is, and what has made it. Study that face, which is neither rudely masculine nor softly feminine, but makes one think always of the mother and the boy behind the man, and you will catch a glimpse of what life means; something of what lies hidden in the souls of the lowliest; something of the cost of all progress; something of the worth and dignity of noble human living.

What is that which shines upon us in the face of Lincoln and flashes in his words? That is another way of asking, what is the genius of America? What is the spirit underlying our institutions, and which seeks to enshrine itself in the lives and laws of men in this land? It is a practical mysticism—not the frenzy of French madness, but a noble and sane vision of the divinity and worth of the human soul taking the form of an ideal realism, which has been the beacon light of all our history. From the first our land has been, in a peculiar sense, the home of moral idealism. That idealism launched the Mayflower and lighted it across wintry seas. It shone in the rude church, in the town-meeting, in the school house, not less than in the literature and laws of our early days. It stirred in the souls of the pioneers who crossed the prairies as their fathers had crossed the waters. Daniel Boone was not simply a wanderer in quest of adventure, but a poet who saw lyrics in the rustle of the leaves and epics from the mountain tops.

Our fathers had a vision of God moving in human affairs, making for liberty, justice, and truth—a great

will calling men to will its purposes that a larger life might come. This unprofessed religion, so to name it, produced two types of men who helped their fellows. One studied the world, adapted itself to it, forged ahead, whether born in a hovel, a farmhouse, or a palace. It was clear-headed, dealt with things as they are, and helped the world with energy, sagacity, and purpose. We see it in Franklin, "our Shakespeare with his wings clipped." The other type was less appreciated, less certain to win, because all sensitiveness and suffering, and these noble qualities carry with them no assurance of reward. Lincoln combined these two types in a manner unique and unforgettable. Calm, cool, sagacious, logical, his sympathy was as broad as his purpose was inflexible, and his heart throbbed with every shade of feeling. If he labored to achieve, he never trod the weaker under foot, and never hardened his heart against the worthless. With a mind relentless in truth he joined a heart limitless in charity, and because of this union of mind and heart he has become a star to follow, a type of that to which men would entrust their very souls.

To be more specific, let us analyze the genius of America as a vision, a faith, and a prophecy. First of all, it is a vision of the majesty and right of the human soul as above and superior to all institutions of whatever kind. Our fathers held that the state exists for man, not man for the state, and that man may make or unmake codes, courts, and laws. Lincoln shared that vision, lived in it, and wrought in the light of it. Hence his noble, and sometimes daring, radicalism, as when he defied the decision of the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case and appealed to the people to reverse it. Yet his radicalism was tempered, always, by an equally noble conservatism, and if the storm of war had not broken upon his head he would have reversed that decision, not as a fanatic, but as a lawyer. Daringly radical in theory, he had a fine caution, a regard for facts, and a reverence for history in practice. Thus he held in perfect balance the two forces which we must ever hold together, or ruin will fall upon us.

Radicalism, if left to run wild, ends in wreck, overthrowing the old order before there is anything to take its place, and bringing in its wake the most terrible reaction. Napoleon followed the French revolution, and chaos would have followed the radicalism of Phillips and John Brown had not it been for the wise, firm, far-seeing conservatism of Lincoln.



In the same way, conservatism alone may easily end in obscurantism, which is folly. Often it becomes a mere stupid preservatism. It was the radical sympathy of Lincoln that gave glow and color and fire to his conservatism, and made it noble. He felt all that Phillips and Garrison felt, but he saw more than they saw. If he moved slowly, it was not that he did not want to move faster, but because he knew that in a nation such as ours no law can have power, no reform can be effective, unless the people are ready for it. His advance was cautious, but not timid or fearful. Back of his wise caution lay a glowing vision of the greatness of the soul and its ultimate sanity.

Forever of highest value to this nation will be the simple faith of Lincoln in the righteousness and right-mindedness of the people. He held that the people can govern themselves, and that they do not need any Caesar, self-appointed or otherwise, to rule them. He knew their faults—how easily they are swept away by the gusts of passion, how often they are played upon by the artful demagogue, how frequently they are muddled and confused. Yet none of these things moved him to doubt. He knew that while you can fool all the people a part of the time, and part of the people all the time, it is impossible to fool all the people all the time. At last the people will come round to the truth, and for that time he waited and worked with a patience, a self-forgetfulness, which made his leadership steady, unvaunting, and as faithful as the stars in their orbits. Despite the dark shadows of his period, and in the depths of depression that overtook and almost abided with him, never once did he lose his serene faith in the triumph of our democratic experiment. Other faith than this is apostasy from the historic and heroic tradition of our republic.

America is the land of the common people, whom Lincoln said the Lord must love because he has made so many of them. For them it exists; that is its unique glory among all lands. Here, for the first time in the story of humanity, the plain man has the right and opportunity to stretch his arms and his soul, and work out his faith, his freedom, and his destiny. The elect and the elite can make their way anywhere. There is, indeed, an enduring worth and nobility in the aristocratic ideal, if by aristocracy you mean an aristocracy not of mere wealth, still less of tawdry social rank, but of fineness of soul, loftiness of character, and native leadership. That is the only aristocracy worthy of the slightest re-

spect. In that sense Lincoln was an aristocrat—a man who towered above his fellows in greatness of soul, not to exploit them, but to lead and exalt them by the might of his genius. Always his appeal was to "the better angels of our natures" which he knew have their home in every human heart. Therefore weak men grew strong in his presence, and cowardly men brave. This it was that made him the foreseer of our history, the prophet of the faith and vision and hope of this land.

Just now many influences are making for a denial of the faith of our fathers. The visionary Superman, and the gospel of eugenics by which that phantom is to be evolved, is a confession on the part of many that nothing can be done with the plain man; that he is simply past praying for. Before ignorance, unrighteousness, depraved instincts, and poisoned heredity, philosophy faints, and leaves the masses to perish with as little pain as possible. It has no hope save for a few elect who are to inhabit what Ibsen called "the third empire." While the theatre amuses itself with its fantastic Superman, created out of the stuff of which dreams are made, let us betake ourselves to Lincoln and his great faith in our fellow men. If we are ever to solve our human problems in any real manner, it must be in the spirit of Lincoln, his faith, his patience, his fine sagacity, his unfailing sympathy, his heroic service, his sweet and saving humor. Once let us forget the faith and spirit of Lincoln, and our flag will lose its colors and be numbered, at last, among the faded banners of dead republics.

Least of all must we betray that faith and spirit in our dealings with the man in black. Many a time, in days ago, as the twilight drew a veil of melancholy over the earthly scene, and the cotton field seemed like shimmering mist melting into the night, I have heard the black folk singing as they returned from their toil. Or maybe it was at eventide, and the mother was singing to her babe in the cabin—a song in which one may hear echoes of the far off days when her savage mothers lulled their little ones with the wild lyrics of their clan. Or yet again, perchance it was on a still summer night, full of mystery and beauty, and the black man was stirred by the faiths and fancies of his strange religion. In all the history of melody there is no music quite so sweet, none quite so sad. Truly it is the song of sorrow, plaintive, pensive and pathetic—the song of a being half child and half man who, waking from the dream of primeval infancy, finds the path to

the higher life thorny and steep, long and weary.

The elevation of a race is a slow and mighty task. Time and patience and faith are needed in so vast an undertaking. Now that the noble idealism of other days has faded and cooled, to some extent, at least, there is danger lest we forget. All of us, men of the north and men of the south, must be patient, humane, just, and not give way to the vanity of despair. We do not need any more negrophobia, like that with which Thomas Dixon suffers, which is a kind of hysterical pessimism. Nor have we any need of that silly, sentimental negrophobia, which was but the sporadic degeneracy of Puritan culture. What we need above all things is a genuine Christianity, more of it, and the kind that will work—and wait. Sympathy, justice, sincerity, dignity, charity, common sense illuminated by the poetic and seer-like vision—these are the only solvents of our social, racial, and political evils. Hope there is none save in the spirit which lived and wrought in Lincoln, which was in a very real sense the spirit of Jesus.

Of what that spirit is, and how it deals with the affairs of state, Lincoln was at once an example and a prophecy. So completely did he embody our great inheritance of idealism, that his very name suggests the spiritual meaning of our national life. "His practical life was spiritual," said Herndon, and that was the exact truth. No man of the White House ever made so profound a religious impress and appeal as Lincoln did in his closing years. His cleanliness of life, his incorruptible honesty, his unflinching justice, his exquisite and moving compassion made his life vicarious in a way never approached by any one among us. He rested in the thought of the Eternal. His one aim and effort was to know the will of God and do it in a manner worthy

of that high behest. Towards the end the awful spell of the Unseen world seemed to cover him like a mantle, lending a nameless and haunting charm to his words and acts. If religion took this form in his life and character, it was the better to show men what they must be and do in this land.

Even today, though fifty years have fled, no man can study Lincoln and not feel an inexpressible longing to be wiser, braver, and purer. To have produced such a man is more honor to our nation than to have built the pyramids. If this nation which Lincoln saved and served would pay due homage to his memory, it must grow in intelligence and character, in justice and self control, in purity of life and benignity of policy, until it shall serve mankind as he served it. We live in new and changed times, with new tasks and new problems before us, but Lincoln, with his brave old wisdom of sincerity and sympathy, still lives, and of his influence and fame there will be no end.

A mountain is a mystery; such was Lincoln. It is tall, rugged, isolated; so was he. It has seams and crevices that would disfigure the beauty of a hill, but they constitute no blemish on its massive sublimity. There are sheltered nooks among its crags where flowers bloom, and where bright streams sparkle in the sunlight. But there are also huge masses of denuded rock which tell of the harsh attrition of earlier times. The clouds that veil its summit lend it an air of lonesomeness and melancholy. Wild storms beat against it with awful fury, waging war with the swift strokes of lightning to the music of deep-toned thunders. Yet through storm and calm it remains unmoved, unshaken. Its mission is the same through all its varying moods. The same God that made the mountain made the man, and his ways are past finding out.



**Prayer.**

Infinite Father, who art the height to which we cannot attain, the depth we cannot search out, before Thy majesty we are as nothing. Yet hast Thou endowed us with a power of will by which we seem to be akin to Thee, if not partakers, in some small degree, of Thy creative might. How perilous is this power unless Thou rule it, making stronger in us the will to hear and obey the law of the spirit rather than the law of the flesh. Let us not go our own way to our undoing, but keep us subdued withal to a wise humility of mind that we may will to do Thy holy will.

Make us aware that Thou art with us in that lonely inner life which each of us lives, where motives pull us to and fro, and where battles are fought, now with the shout of victory, now with the shame of defeat. May we know that with Thee we have always to do: that Thou followest us in the hidden, silent depths where none can follow us but Thee. Rule Thou in that secret chamber in which is our true life, that out of it may come only what is noble, pure, and full of beauty. Leave us not to be baffled by our evil and weakness, but help us so to deal with our infirmities as to produce from them growths of firmness and grace.

If any have come to this altar sad or hopeless by reason of moral defeat, may they leave here their sorrow and take a song away. We pray for those doomed to uncertain struggle with a weak will, and those who would help them and cannot do it. We pray for those who start, and fail, and have to begin again to live the higher life. We pray for those who are set apart from their fellows by the terrible isolation of a great, unshared sorrow, and who feel that none can be as desolate as they. Bestow the gift of faith; increase our courage; grant peace to those who know not peace, and Thy mercy to us all.

What is our life unless Thou live in it, over it, through it, the light and power and joy of its days! Great God, make each of us feel that Thou art near us, ever-present, all-seeing, all-loving, our dearest friend, our surest refuge, our hope and help. Teach us to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Thee, trusting where we cannot see, making Thy will our own. Forgive our sins; keep us inwardly clean, and may no root of evil, no dust of care stain the east window of the soul, where there is Light. In His name, Amen.

**Sermon.**

"I will arise and go to my father." Luke 15:18.

"If any man will to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." John 7:17.

It may be only a fancy, but it often seems that in each stage of our human advance, some one power of the mind takes the throne and holds sway. First we see the imagination running riot in the tropical splendor of the old mythologies—peopling earth and sea and air with winged forms. Then conscience came to power and men fell under the spell of its edicts. Later on man became a rationalist and began to analyze and question the visions of his fancy, as the Greek thinkers did the gods of Olympus. And as one faculty of the mind after another flowered forth it altered, in many ways, the human outlook upon life.

At any rate, in our day the power in which man rejoices, and upon which he lays most stress, is the will, as though he had suddenly become aware of a new element in life. Many things have helped to this discovery, most potent of all, perhaps, being the new sense of mastery over the forces of nature. Fifty years ago science gave a reading of nature which made it seem unfriendly, if not actually hostile, to mankind. Gentle souls were horrified at the vision of "nature red in tooth and claw," and the faith of many was shaken. Huxley declared open war on the ground that since nature lends no aid to our moral ideals, we must defy her and fight for our ideals; fight alone if need be. Happily we have found that mother nature is not an enemy but a friend, but her challenge to man evoked in him a sense of power, and with it a hope, such as he had hardly known before.

Taken at their face value, many facts of life seem to be unmanageable, but we cannot read them aright until we view them in the light of the creative will of man. From this point of view they are more plastic, and even the most distracting confusions of the world yield a measure of obedience to the human will. Men now see that we have no right to sit down before even our most refractory problem, whether of personality or of society, and wait for the solution to arrive from without. We must master our difficulties by the power of thought and will, and in the final grapple victory lies in making them melt away into modes of our own being. God meets with man on the basis of creative purpose. His seeming

indifference and silence are a friendly challenge to that in man most akin to Himself. He asks no tame submission to the world as it is, but calls man to build the world as it ought to be. Such is the vision of things by which we are ruled in our time, and one may trace it everywhere in our thought and life.

Let me trace it a little way that all may see how far it goes. Take philosophy, and we are soon under the sway of Schopenhauer and his vision of the world as will—a profound insight, albeit discolored by the mood of the thinker. Since the driving power and final reality of the world is Will, the master force in man is “the will to live.” To this Nietzsche added the Will to Power; and James, the Will to Believe. Hence the emphasis in our day upon the will as the central fact in the knowledge of truth and in the making of character. Modern thinkers, from James to Eucken, have much to say about the will as a maker of truth. That is to say, only as man meets the world divinely does it show itself divine. Then it supports faith; but without such an act of the will, no discovery of divinity is possible. Otherwise the world can have no divinity, but only a menacing materiality, until we throw over it the category under whose dome its holiness can rise visible and actual. This is not make-believe, but the appropriation of reality by the power of the will. Truth cannot live for us, as divine and beneficent, except in the opportunity created by our good will; no truth becomes our truth until we make it so. This is a fact which we can verify experimentally as often as we try; and it is the strongest foundation on which any faith can rest. It is no other than the principle of Jesus that if any man wills to do the will of God he shall know the truth. Hence the great words of Kant:

“The righteous man may say: I will that there should be a God; I will that, though in this world of natural necessity, I should not be of it, but should also belong to a purely intelligible world of freedom; finally, I will that my duration should be endless. On this faith I insist and will not let it be taken from me.”

On the stage, which is always closely in touch with life, we see this new sense of the power of the will take forms of flesh and blood and live before our eyes. Indeed, it has changed radically our whole conception of tragedy. If ancient drama held the bitterness of tragedy to be that man is the sport, the toy, and finally the victim of fate, the modern drama asserts the might and right of the soul to overcome Fate and master it.

Therefore, tragedy with us lies in whatever stunts, dwarfs and cripples the soul, and prevents its victory. Hence the demand, so eloquent in our age, for social conditions in which the human soul can stand erect, grow, and by a more abundant life triumph over Fate. So, too, the prophetic vision, flitting through the twilight of our dreams, of a humanity heroic and victorious, radiant with intellect, strong with the gentleness of true girthood, noble, joyous, and free.

Not unnaturally it was Ibsen, the master of the modern drama, who wrote our two great tragedies of the will. What a grand figure is “Brand,” moving swiftly like Elijah, stern, unbending, demanding “All or Nothing,” offering all, mother, wife and child, on the altar of an idea. Such a figure fills one with awe, almost with terror, as we see him alone in the mountains, worshipping in his “ice-church,” where he learns, too late, that God is Love as well as Will. On the other side is “Peer Gynt,” a most engaging scrape-grace, light in his loves, devious in his winding ways, going around difficulties rather than over them, princely in his dreams, yet a pauper in his weakness of will. It is the tragedy of a will not firmly fashioned, showing us a bundle of impulses ill-arranged, lacking unity, the prey to every gust of dream or passion. Of a truth the old Button-maker tells him in the end that he is no sinner in the high sense, and like others must go back to the casting-ladle, and be made over. We need not impute dogma to a great artist, but the meaning of Ibsen is so plain that he who runs may read.

Or we might trace the same tendency in the religious thought of our day. On all sides there is revolt against the older view of the Divine Decrees—a truth noble when rightly stated, but horrible when over emphasized—in behalf of the creative majesty of the human will. Though hedged about, the will of man is yet real, and the key to faith and character. No one has stated this revolt more picturesquely than Harriet Stowe in “Oldtown Folks,” where Sam Lawson comments on a sermon he heard. Let him tell it in his own words:

“Wal, Parson Simpson is a smart man; but I tell ye, it's kind o' discouragin'. Why, he said our state and condition by natur was just like this. We was clear down in a well fifty feet deep, and all the sides all round nothin' but glare ice; but we was under immediate obligations to get out, 'cause we was free, voluntary agents. But nobody ever had



got out, and nobody would, unless the Lord reached down and took 'em. And whether he would or not nobody could tell; it was all sovereignty. He said there wan't one in a hundred, not one in a thousand, not one in ten thousand, that would be saved. Lordy massy, says I to myself, ef that's so, any of 'em is welcome to my chance. And I kind o' ris up and come out."

There are many varieties of force in the world—physical, intellectual, moral, social—but none of these forces can do its work without modification and direction from the purpose of man. Even our ideals are destructive until they become our volitions. Without control our virtues will waste and slay. But as human purpose rises in moral quality it rises in power, so that a perfectly good will is master of life. Who can forget that echoing sentence quoted by Poe as a motto of one of his wierdest stories: "Man does not yield himself to death save only through the weakness of his will!" Thus it is on the basis of the creative will that man and God establish relations, and share in the divine craftsmanship which is shaping the world after the pattern shown in the Mount.

The challenge of God to the will of man runs through all the finer aspects of our life. Faith, hope, and character live in the presence of that challenge. Faith does not mean the absence of doubt; it is doubt held at bay. Faith is the loyal resolve which sees the world as it is capable of becoming, and commits its fortunes to the effort to make real what it thus sees. It is an act of the moral will which, in the words of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, gives substance to our hopes and evidence of things unseen. Hope is the resolute facing of risks, and love has a great resolution at its heart. In the same way, character is the warp of heredity and the woof of environment woven, by the power of will, on the loom of life. We are given the rough materials and some sort of design for a house of life, but the will is the master builder. Life is thus a challenge to our creative power, and unless we meet it our lives will be scattered in disarray, lacking unity and beauty.

Because it is true, as Novalis held, that "character is completely fashioned will," and because it is also true that our character is our destiny, the culture of the will is the highest art of life. This at least is true: by as much as we will, by so much do we live; for to will is to live, and he who has ceased to will is dead, however active he may seem to be. When all is said, the power to form a clear, strong, noble purpose, and, against

every opposition, quietly to abide by it, is the sign of the royalty of the soul, and the mark of its kinship with the Divine. Terrible mistakes are made by the wayward or perverted will, but the greatest mistake is not to cultivate the will, or to pursue a course which destroys its power. He who by animal indulgence, by yielding to the slavery of evil habit, has lost the inner impetus which makes the will a power over himself and others, has sunk out of the category of manhood. Therefore the first thing a man should do is to keep faith with himself, and the last thing he ought ever to venture is to break it.

How can a man cultivate his will? By practice, of course, for only in that way can any power either of mind or body be developed. One may train his will as an athlete trains his muscles, bringing strength out of weakness, firmness out of flabbiness. By a resolute doing of distasteful things, by a stubborn resistance to the pull and lure of indulgence, by forming a purpose and following an ideal, even a weak will may be fashioned into power. It is not easy to do, nor can it be done all at once; but it must be done else we are like a ship without a rudder, going everywhere and therefore nowhere. One temptation resisted makes it easier to withstand the next. Here as everywhere, it is the putting forth of the will in high moral resolve that makes it strong and firm. If this demands that we be heroic, that is the very reason why we are beset in this world by every manner of difficulty, temptation, and peril. Since we are every day in jeopardy of moral surprise and defeat, it behooves us to be alert and active in building us a secure inner defense.

By what method can a man best practice the art of exercising his will? By attention, and the intent involved in attention, as George Eliot has taught us. Much is said in our day about the influence of environment in the shaping of human character, but we must have a care here lest we err. No one is influenced directly by the whole of his environment, but only by that part of it to which he attends. Often two boys go forth from the same home, one to nobility of life and the other to moral shipwreck. That was because one attended to what was most worth while in his surroundings, while the other fixed his attention upon something less noble, or upon nothing at all and drifted to ruin. Every soul has this power of self-direction and option amongst the influences and inclinations urging themselves upon it. By fixing attention upon that which calls

up a noble motive, that motive may be made to prevail and rule.

But, it may be asked, how can a man select and fix attention upon the things which evoke and give scepter to the nobler motives? By having a purpose in life worthy of his devotion and effort. What amazes me more than almost anything else is the number of young men who have no definite purpose and ideal as to what they want to do and be in life. Such a man is a loafer in the world. He cannot justify his existence. Nor is he any the less a loafer because he wears diamond stud-buttons and rides in an auto. For all that, he is an aimless idler in this busy "sounding-house of labor" we call the world, doing nothing and therefore sure to be nothing. Like Peer Gynt, he is an easy victim of every fit of fancy, every swirl of passion. It is a high purpose, faithfully followed and loyally served, that gives unity, dignity and power to the life of a man.

When a young man does not know where he is going he is sure to get nowhere. But when he has a worthy end in view, he puts aside whatever interferes with it, turns neither to the right nor the left, and so arrives. For days the nation has been paying tribute to the memory of Lincoln—a man of clear head, kind heart, and unbreakable will. Early in life, when he witnessed a slave auction in the South, he vowed to his God to strike a blow at that abomination; and he never rested, never faltered, until he

delivered so terrific a blow that he put an end to that evil. It may not be given to any of us to do such great and far-reaching deeds, but each one of us can attain to fineness of character and firmness of moral will. How grand it is to see a young man vow allegiance to a lofty ideal, and follow it through light and shadow till the night cometh, when no man can work.

"So nigh is grandeur to our dust,

So near is God to man;

When duty whispers low, 'Thou must,'

The youth replies, 'I can!'"

Finally, if a man would fulfill his vows of purity and honor with the fine gesture of a noble will, let him seek the aid of the Eternal Will in prayer. If he has wandered afar, like the prodigal son, let him say, "I will arise and go to my Father," who is rich in compassion. When he is sorely tried by difficulty or temptation, let him betake himself to the source and fountain of power. Daily prayer is the wisest habit of life. Therein a man learns the true freedom of the will, which consists in obeying a Will greater and wiser than his own. Nor can he ever find peace of heart in any other way than by making the will of God his will.

"Take my will and make it Thine,  
It shall be no longer mine.  
Take my heart—it is Thine own,  
It shall be Thy royal throne.  
Take myself, and I will be  
Ever, only, all for Thee."